



Glaciers played a prominent role in shaping the plants and animals that live in the parks today. In particular, native fish were restricted to low-elevation, non-glaciated streams of the parks (shown in gray). Fish were not able to colonize glaciated regions due to steep cascades and waterfalls that remained after the glaciers melted. This left the parks' high-elevation lakes and streams without fish. Shown in light blue is the extent of glacier formation within the parks during the Tahoe glaciation—the most recent major glaciation in the Sierra Nevada, which occurred 42,000 to 50,000 years ago.